DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 606 CE 001 399

AUTHOR Curry, Evans W.
TITLE A Theoretical and Conceptual Reformulation of the Concept "Anticipatory Goal Deflection" and a Strategy for Future Research.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society (36th, Atlanta, Georgia, 1973)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Achievement Need; *Conceptual Schemes; Educational Philosophy; Educational Sociology; Models; *Occupational Aspiration; Racial Factors; Sex (Characteristics); Social Psychology; *Status; Success Factors; *Theories
IDENTIFIERS Anticipatory Goal Deflection; *Career Expectations

ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the broad area of status attainment, attempting to restructure the concept of anticipatory goal deflection (AGD) (distinction between career expectations and aspirations; Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966) "so as to optimize its integration into a theoretical structure based on sociological and social psychological research and theory." A review of past research on this topic has revealed conflicts with the AGD in accounting for the importance of the goal achieved as well as the achievement per se. A general success index must reflect both personal and social success. The shifting of emphasis from AGD to anticipatory success has created a new concept of AGD which is an inverse function of anticipatory success. A system of relationships, which possesses a systematic logic in terms of sociological and psychological research and theory, may be represented in a recursive model incorporating two types of anticipatory success, educational and occupational, as well as achievement motivation, occupational goal impedance, and status factor. The general model which evolved from this study has yielded nine testable hypotheses; it should be evaluated as a general model and then analyzed controlling for race, sex and race, and sex. (EA)

ED 091606

No

A Theoretical and Conceptual Reformulation of the Concept "Anticipatory Goal Deflection" and a Strategy for Future Research

Evans W. Curry

The Ohio State University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

CE 001 397

*Paper read at the thirty-sixth annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Society at Atlanta, Georgia, 1973.

Introduction

This paper deals with an area of research couched broadly in the status attainment area. Specifically, it attempts to reconstruct (conceptually and operationally) the concept anticipatory goal deflection (Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966). The intent is to restructure AGD so as to optimize its integration into a theoretical structure based on sociological and social psychological research and theory. The resultant model is a five variable recursive one, the logic of the linkages of which are shown to rest in research and theory.

The concept anticipatory goal deflection (AGD) developed by Kuvlesky and Bealer (1966) has generated both sociological interest and research (Ameen, 1967; Lever, 1969; Kuvlesky, Wright and Jaurez, 1969; Cosby and Picou, 1971; Curry, 1970; Curry and Picou, 1971). The concept can be criticized, however, from two points. The first is a lack of empirical documentation of the theoretical basis of the concept. The second is lack of integration of the concept into a larger sociological frame of reference.

The concept AGD has been used in research in terms of a distinction between career expectations and aspirations (see: Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966) taken as an empirical given. The problem is primarily one of criteria. These concepts, to be argued relevant to sociology, must be shown to have consequences for social organization and/or interaction. Barring this, they must be shown minimally to have their origins in social organization or interaction, thus establishing their potential consequences for one or both.

The second problem, the lack of conceptual integration of AGD, has yielded primarily empirical delineations limited to those findings. Relationships tend to be explained by ad hoc speculations rather than inferences consistent with a theoritical perspective within which the empirical study was framed (for example, see: Curry and Picou, 1971 and Cosby and Picou, 1971). This stems from a basic weakness in the conceptualization and particularly the operationalization of the concept AGD. This paper explores a model which modifies both the conceptualization and the operationalization of this variable.

The Concept Anticipatory Goal Deflection

The concept AGD is defined as the real difference between expectations and aspirations (Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966). Symbolically this may be represented as:

$$D = E - A$$

Where:

D = AGD
E = Expectations
A = Aspirations

The problem here, as noted above, is that the concept does not relate to a larger sociological framework. Consequently, the operationalization taps an individual's anticipated achievement relative to his own goals, but not to that of the culture.

For example:

Assume:

$$D_1 = E_1 - A_1 \qquad (1)$$

and:

$$D_2 = E_2 - A_2 \qquad (2)$$

and:

$$A_1 \neq A_2 \quad (3)$$

but:

$$E_1 = A_1 \quad (4)$$

and:

$$E_2 = A_2 \quad (5)$$

then:

$$D_1 = D_2 \quad (6)$$

When this conclusion is considered against the work of Merton (1957) and the complimentary work of Williams (1970) the inadequacy of the preceeding argument becomes apparent. Their perspective is simply that American society is characterized by a very strong emphasis on success and achievement (Merton, 1957: 136-139 and Williams, 1970: 454).

Further, Merton (1957: 132) argues that alternative goals are differintially valued, yielding a hierarchy of goals. This contention receives empirical support in the occupational domain from the prestige studies that have been conducted over the years (see: Hodge, Siegel and Rossi: 1966, 322-332). This argument points to the importance of the goal achieved as well as the achievement <u>per se</u>. The current operationalization of AGD in the sociological literature clearly does not account for this. If AGD is construed as a negative form of success ($\bar{S}$):

then from (1):

$$\bar{S}_1 = D_1 \quad (7)$$

and from (2):

$$\bar{S}_2 = D_2 \qquad (8)$$

then from (6):

$$\bar{S}_1 = \bar{S}_2 \qquad (9)$$

but from (3) placed in a cultural perspective:

$$\bar{S}_1 \neq \bar{S}_2 \qquad (10)$$

The contradiction of conclusions (9) and (10) suggest the inadequacy of the original AGD formulation.

From the foregoing discussion two components of success can be identified. One is personal success, measured in terms of the degree to which an individual is able to attain his own goals. The other might be termed "social success", measured in terms of the degree to which an individual is able to attain a goal highly valued in the culture. The position is taken herein that a general success index must reflect both these components. Further, by shifting emphasis from AGD to anticipatory success, a new concept emerges, which can be placed within a framework of sociological theory. The new concept of AGD is so structured as to be a perfect inverse function of anticipatory success. That is the correlation between AGD and anticipatory success equals -1. and the slope of the line when one is regressed on the other equals -1. In this context AGD is 1 minus anticipatory success.

Merton (1957: 152) suggests that success can be expressed as the ratio of one's achievement to one's goals or aspirations. While suggestive, this formulation is inadequate for much the same reason as is the original AGD formulation. That is, a person who achieves

a lower or less valued goal may have the same success score as one who achieves a higher goal. This does not account for achievement relative to cultural values. This problem can be resolved by employing the distinction noted above (i.e., personal and social success). Personal success can be defined, following Merton, as the ratio of one's achievement to one's goals or attainment. Social success can be defined as the ratio of one's achievement to the highest valued cultural goal within the domain in question. The product of these two values yields an index conforming to the criteria established above and possessing a range from 0. to 1., as shall be shown in the ensuing discussion. Symbolically, this concept may be stated as follows:

$$S = \frac{A}{G}\,\frac{A}{V} \qquad (2.1)$$

$$= \frac{A^2}{GV} \qquad (2.2)$$

where:

S = success index (2.3)

A = achievement (2.4)

G = individual's goal or aspiration (2.5)

V = highest valued goal within the domain (2.6)

The above formulation as stated possesses a particular weakness. Namely, it is possible for the cultural value of one's achievement to be greater than the cultural value of one's goal. This factor makes the upper limit of the success index indeterminate.

However, by viewing personal goals or aspirations as the constraining value on personal success, this dilemma may be circumvented. That is, when one exceeds his goals his personal success is attenuated to the same degree as if he has fallen short of his goal to the same degree. What is presented here can be stated as the limit on personal success. This view tends to be supported by the work of Atkinson (1964) where he argues that both the individual who selects a goal for which the subjective probability of attainment approaches 0. and the individual who selects a goal for which the subjective probability of attainment approaches 1. are characterized by low N achievement. He (Atkinson, 1964) also demonstrates from experimental studies that individuals with low N achievement tend to choose unrealistically high or unrealistically low goals. This constraint or limit is operationalized as follows:

when $A \leq G$:

$$C = G \tag{2.7}$$

where:

A = defined in (2.4)
G = defined in (2.5)
C = constraint of limit on personal success (2.8)

when $A > G$:

$$C = A + \left\{ \frac{V-G}{G} \quad (A-G) \right\} \tag{2.9}$$

where:

C = defined in (2.8)
A = defined in (2.4)
V = defined in (2.6)
G = defined in (2.5)

which simplifies to:

$$C = \frac{VA}{G} - V + G \qquad (2.10)$$

Within this framework, personal achievement, which exceeds the personal goal, is "adjusted" in the computation of personal success in the same manner as if personal achievement had fallen short of the personal goal to the same relative degree. Such a constraint is consistent with Merton's (1957, 139) statement "not failure, but low aim, is crime." Success as defined in (2.2) is now redefined:

$$S = \frac{A^2}{CV} \qquad (3.0)$$

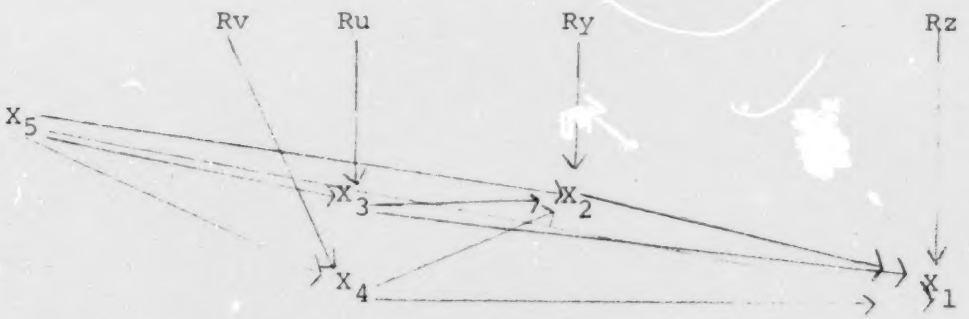
All terms are previously defined.

This paper will deal with anticipatory success rather than actual success. The operationalization developed above requires only slight modification to fit this scheme. Only the substitution of expected achievement (expectations) for actual achievement is required. From this perspective AGD is defined as one minus anticipatory success. Therefore, from whatever relationships may be shown to exist between anticipatory success and other variables the inverse may be inferred to hold for AGD.

Anticipatory Success and Antecedent Relations: Toward an Operational Criteria

Having arrived at a conceptual and operational statement of success, the task becomes to place the variables in a "system of relationships" which give it sociological relevance. It is not the intent of this paper to test the model empirically. The task here is to state a system of relationship which possess a systematic logic in terms of sociological and social psychological research and theory. It is to this task that the remainder of the paper addresses itself.

Such a system of relationships may be represented in a recursive model which incorporates two types of anticipatory success, educational and occupational. The model is presented in figure 1.



where:

X_1 = anticipatory occupational success

X_2 = anticipatory educational success

X_3 = achievement motivation

X_4 = occupational goal impedance

X_5 = status factor

Figure 1. Basic Path Model of Anticipatory Success

While the above model could be expanded to incorporate other variables, it represents a minimal model which is capable of providing an evaluation of the concept anticipatory success.

The logic of the relationships depicted above is straight-forward and can be shown to derive from both theoretical and empirical work done principally in sociology but also in social psychology. The relationship ($X_2 \longrightarrow X_1$) can be inferred directly from Merton's (1957, 132-33) means-ends distinction.

It is hypothesised that the partial regression coefficant between X_1, X_2, and X_3 as:

The linkages ($X_3 \rightarrow X_2$ and $X_3 \rightarrow X_1$) are derived from the work of Atkinson (1964) and McClelland (1961). The means-end distinction argues that the relationship is properly:

$$X_3 \longrightarrow X_2 \longrightarrow X_1$$

It is therefore hypothesized that the partial regression coefficient between:

1. X_1 and $X_3 = 0$.
2. X_2 and $X_3 > 0$.

For X_4 hypothesized relationships are that the partial regression coefficients between:

1. X_1 and $X_4 > 0$.
2. X_2 and $X_4 > 0$.

Both relationships are hypothesized as greater than 0., due to the fact that the measurement of occupational goal impedance taps aspects limiting educational achievement as well as other limitations on occupational achievement per se. The relationships can be inferred from a definition of the situation (Thomas, 1928: 584) perspective. That is as the perceived number of obstacles and their intensity of obstruction increases one's anticipated success decreases. Empirical work which tends to corroborate this argument include Han (1969) and Curry and Picou (1971).

The logic of the relationships of the status factor (X_5) can only be structured by anticipating the operationalization of the variable. Certain premises are assumed as a basis for its (X_5) structure. The first is that a status which is achieved by an individual becomes an ascribed status for his progeny at least in the dependency period of the child. The second is that while an individual possess multiple statuses (Bertrand, 1972: 188) their effect on progeny is in agregate rather than individually. This is held to be true whether statuses are taken as an "index" of a value or attitudinal structure which is transmitted by parents to progeny through interaction or whether the ascribed statuses constitute a background or gestalt from which the child developes his definition of the situation. In this discussion the former shall be called "interaction effects" and the latter "structural effects." One approach which may be taken is to create an index of the common variance of status indicators which are indicated from research and theory to be relevant. These might include such indicators as fathers' education, mothers' education, fathers' occupation, mothers' occupation, family income, etc. A technique appropriate for tapping common variance is factor analysis (Kerlinger; 1964: 665). This type of logic is implicit in the Wisconsin status attainment work (see: Sewell, Haller and Portes, 1969; Sewell, Haller and Ohlendorf, 1970).

There is no work conceptual or empirical which clearly demonstrates status factor to be either interactive or structural.

However, a limited argument can be established that for the model developed the consequences are the same. That is, the predicted relationship between other variables and the status factor remain unchanged whether its effect is taken as interactional or structural.

Wendling and Elliot (1968) demonstrated that middle class mothers in two California school districts held higher educational aspirations and expectations for their ninth grade children than mothers from working class or lower class backgrounds. Further, working class mothers held higher aspirations and expectations than lower class mothers.

Analyzing a probability sample comprised of ten percent of the male high school seniors in the state of Washington, Empey (1956: 706) reported both preferred level of occupational aspiration (aspiration) and anticipated level of occupational aspiration (expectations) to be significantly and positively related to fathers occupational status. Further inspection of the mean preferred and anticipated occupational aspirations for each of the ten fathers' occupational status categories reveals that mean preferred aspirations exceed mean anticipated aspirations in eight of the ten categories (Empey; 1956: 708). However, the mean difference did not obtain statistical significance. On the other hand, analysis (author's analysis) of the association between the rank order of fathers' occupational status and the absolute difference between preferred and anticipated aspirations yielded a Spearmans rho of .624, significant at the .05 level of confidence with 10 pairs of observations (Siegel, 1956: 284).

It should be noted that ranking the absolute differences between preferred and anticipated aspiration is consistent with the concept of aspirations as a limiting function developed earlier in this paper (pp.6-8).

Rehberg (1967) conducted a study of 2,852 urban sophomore males in Pennsylvania in which both occupational and educational aspirations and expectations were analyzed. While the data he presents does not allow for an analysis of the magnitude of differences in aspirations and expectations, he does present the proportion of respondents aspiring and expecting high-level goals by class (Rehberg, 1967: 86). When the 18 classes are rank ordered and the difference in percentage expecting high level plans for each class is rank ordered from smallest difference to the largest, Spearmans rhos of .651 and .676 result for occupational and educational differences respectively. Both values are significant at the .01 level of confidence with 18 pairs of observations (Siegel, 1956: 284).

The above data lead to the tenative hypothesis that the partial regression coefficient between:

1. X_1 and $X_5 > 0$.
2. X_2 and $X_5 > 0$.

These hypothesis are termed tenative for three reasons. The first is that the class indicators in all of the above studies are some form of fathers' occupation while this paper suggests that some aggregate measure of status and achievement of parents to be a more relevant indicator. The second is that the studies were not conducted to answer the question raised herein, all but the secondary analysis

presented above are suggestive of a linkage between some form of social class and anticipatory success. The third is that there is not adequate evidence to indicate whether the effect of a status factor is only indirect through achievement motivation and goal impedence or both direct and indirect. The author is able to discover only two studies which deal somewhat with this question, Han (1969) and Curry and Picou (1971).

Han (1969) distinguished perception of limited opportunity and perception of limited ability. While not directly comparable this schema is analogous to goal impedance. The findings of Han's research are as follows:

1. Perception of limitations effected expectations but not aspirations (pp. 683, 684)
2. Perception of limitations had a slight effect on expectations when family status was held constant (p. 685)
3. Perception of limited opportunity effected discrepency between aspiration only for low family status while perception of limited ability effected discrepency between aspirations and expectations for all levels of family status (pp. 686, 687)

These findings are limited in there generalizability by the sample (Han, 1969: 687). However, they suggest the perception of opportunity does effect anticipated success. Additionally, though the data are not analyzed, inspection of the tables suggests that discrepency between aspirations and expectations tend to increase as family status decreases when perception of limitations is held constant (see: Han, 1969: 686, 687). This would argue for the hypothesis concerning X_1 and X_5, and X_2 and X_5 above.

Curry and Picou (1971) found that both fathers' education and goal impedance effected anticipatory occupational goal deflection. Additionally fathers occupation had a weak negative effect on goal impedance. It should be noted, however, that total explained variance was very small (Curry, and Picou, 1971: 327).

While neither of the studies above deal with the same measurement of variables as this study, they are suggestive. From these sources it is tenatively hypothesized that the partial regression coe-ficient between X_4 and $X_5 > 0$.

The final relationship to X_5 is that of achievement motivation (X_3). From the work of McClelland (1961) it is hypothesized that the partial regression coefficient between X_3 and $X_5 > 0$. McClelland (1961: 362-64) cites studies indicating a positive relationship between social class and N achievement. His report indicates that the middle class tends to be somewhat higher than the upper class in N achievement. This suggests that were the above hypothesis supported, the strength of the relationship may be somewhat underestimated.

In summary the model (figure 1) yields nine testable hypotheses. They are that the standardized regression coefficients between:

1. X_1 and $X_2 > 0$.
2. X_1 and $X_3 = 0$.
3. X_1 and $X_4 > 0$.
4. X_1 and $X_5 > 0$.
5. X_2 and $X_3 > 0$.
6. X_2 and $X_4 > 0$.
7. X_2 and $X_5 > 0$.

8. X_3 and $X_5 > 0$.

9. X_4 and $X_5 > 0$.

No relationship is posited between X_3 and X_4 and the residuals are assumed uncorrelated.

The model developed herein is proposed as a general model and must be evaluated as such. However, preliminary findings in a study of career pattern of women by Vetter (forthcoming) and sex differences found by Han (1969) in the study cited earlier indicate that the model should be examined controlling for sex. Additionally, findings by Carter, et. al (1972) concerning racial variations in the aspiration formation process, utilizing the same data which shall be employed in this investigation indicates the utility of controlling for race. Therefore, the proposed causal model should be evaluated as a general model and then analyzed controlling for race, sex and race and sex. This procedure yields nine control categories within which models would be evaluated.

References

Ameen, Bilquis A.
1967 "Occupational Status Orientations and Perception of Opportunity: A Racial Comparison of Rural Youth From Depressed Areas." (Unpublished Masters Thesis, Texas A&M University, October)

Ackoff, Russell L.
1953 The Design of Social Research Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Atkinson, J.W.
1964 An Introduction to Motivation. Princeton: Van Nostrand.

Bertrand, Alvin L.
1971 Social Organization. Chicago, F.A. Davis and Company.

Blalock, Hubert M.
1967 "Path Coefficients vs. Regression Coefficients." American Journal of Sociology 72: 675-676.

Carter, M.T., J.S. Picou, E.W. Curry and G.S. Tracy
1972 "Black-White Differences in the Development of Educational and Occupational Aspiration Levels" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Cosby, Arthur G. and J. Steven Picou
1971 "Agricultural Students and Anticipatory Occupational Goal Deflection" Rural Sociology, 37 (June): 211-214.

Curry, Evans W.
1970 "A Least-Squares Analysis of Variance of Occupational Projections and Anticipatory Occupational Goal Deflection (Unpublished Masters Thesis, Louisiana State University, June).

Curry, Evans W. and J. Steven Picou
1971 "Rural Youth and Anticipatory Occupational Goal Deflection" Journal of Vocational Behavior 1 (October): 317-330.

Empey, Lamar T.
1956 "Social Class and Occupational Aspiration: Comparison of Absolute and Relative Measurement." American Sociological Review (December): 703-709.

Han, Wan Sang
1969 "Two Conflicting Themes: Common Values versus Class Differential Values." American Sociological Review 34 (October): 679-690.

Hodge, Robert W., Paul M. Siefel and Peter H. Rossi.
1966 "Occupational Prestige in the United States: 1925-1963." In Class, Status and Power: Social Stratification in Comparative Perspective. Second edition, edited by Reinhard, Bendix and Seymour M. Lipset. New York: Free Press: 322-332.

Horst, Paul
1965 Factor Analysis of Data Matrices. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Kerlinger, Frederick
1964 The Foundations of Behavioral Research. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Kuvlesky, William P. and Robert C. Bealer
1966 "A Clarification of the Concept 'Occupational Choice'." Rural Sociology 31 (September): 265-276.

Kuvlesky, William P., David E. Wright and Rumaldo Z. Juarez.
"Status Projections and Ethnicity: A Comparison of Mexican-American, Negro and Anglo Youth." Paper read at the Southwestern Sociological Association Meetings, New Orleans, (April).

Lever, Michael F.
1969 "Selected Occupational Status Projections of Youth: An Analysis by Sex, Race, and Socio-Economic Status." (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, January).

McClelland, David C.
1961 The Achieving Society. New York: The Free Press.

Merton, Robert K.
1957 Social Theory and Social Structure. New York: The Free Press.

Picou, J. Steven
1971 "Models of Adolescents' Occupational and Educational Projections: A Three Dimensional Approach" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Louisiana State University).

Rehberg, Richard A.
1967 "Adolescent Career Aspirations and Expectations: Evaluation of Two Contrary Stratification Hypotheses" Pacific Sociological Review (Fall): 81-90.

Schwirian, Kent P. and Anthony J. Lagreca.
1971 "An Ecological Analysis of Urban Mortality Rates." Social Science Quarterly 52: 574-587.

Siegel, Sidney
1956 Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sewell, William H., Archibald O. Haller and Alejandro Portes
1969 "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process" American Sociological Review 34 (February): 82-92.

Sewell, William H., Archibald O. Haller and George W. Ohlendorf
1970 "The Educational and Early Occupational Attainment Process: Replications and Revisions." American Sociological Review 35 (December): 1014-1027.

Thomas, William I.
1928 The Child in America. New York: Knopf.

Vetter, L., Stockburger, D.W. and Shinar, D.
(in Progress) Career Patterns of a National Sample of Women Columbus, Ohio: The Center for Vocational and Technical Education, The Ohio State University.

Weiner, Bernard and Andy Kukla
1970 "An Attributional Analysis of Achievement Motivation" Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 15: 1-20.

Wendling, Aubrey and Delbert S. Elliot
1968 "Class and Race Differentials in Parental Aspirations and Expectations." Pacific Sociological Review (Fall): 123-132.

Williams, Robin M., Jr.
1970 Social Theory and Social Structure. New York: The Free Press.

Wonnacott, Thomas H. and Ronald J. Wonnacott
1969 Introductory Statistics. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.